AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 - 8   (Canceled)

9.   (Previously Presented) A method of selectively substituting content into content streams for transmission to one or more users comprising the steps of:

generating a broadcast data stream comprising a plurality of content blocks and at least one floating reference content block, each of said content blocks comprising content, said floating reference content block being an empty block having metadata but no content;

transmitting said broadcast data stream;

selecting content to be provided in said broadcast data stream via said floating reference content block by comparing and determining an optimal match between at least two criteria selected from the group consisting of a profile of a broadcast station from which said broadcast data stream is transmitted, a profile of an advertisement spot in said broadcast data stream corresponding to said floating reference content block, a profile of a user group comprising a plurality of said users, a profile of one of said users, a profile of said broadcast data stream, and profiles of content available for substitution into said broadcast data stream; and

creating a reference content block comprising at least one of selected content and a reference with which to obtain said selected content from a storage location, said selected content corresponding to said optimal match, said reference content block being used in said broadcast data stream in lieu of said floating reference content block.

10.   (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said creating step comprises the step of configuring selected said content blocks to refer to

different said content blocks depending on which of said users said selected content blocks are selected for.

11.   (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein a broadcast station transmits said broadcast data stream and further comprising the step of:

specifying metadata associated with said content blocks in said broadcast data stream to define which portions of said broadcast data stream are selected for different types of said users;

wherein said selecting step comprises the step of determining said optimal match using said metadata.

Claims 12 - 17 (Canceled)

18.   (Original) A method as claimed in claim 9, comprising the steps of:

determining the number of users receiving said selected content; and

deducting an account corresponding to each provider of said selected content in accordance with said number of users.

19.   (Original) A method as claimed in claim 18, further comprising the step of

transferring at least a portion of said deducted amount to at least one of said broadcast station transmitting said broadcast data stream comprising said selected content, a communication path provider operating a communication path on which said selected content was transmitted, and an entity which generates at least one of said metadata, said content and said broadcast data stream.

Claims 20 – 23 (Canceled)

24.   (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said metadata comprises data specifying at least one of duration of a content block, number

of bytes in a content block, title of content, type of block, security options, security options relating to at least one of encryption, decryption and integrity of the content, a description of the content, format of the at least one of content in a content block selected from the group consisting of audio, video, text, graphics, and data, a description of associated products, a description of the content owner, a description of user rights, unique block identifiers, and a description of how content can be used.

25. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said metadata comprises data specifying at least one of duration of a content block, number of bytes in a content block, security options, security options relating to at least one of encryption, decryption and integrity of the content, format of the at least one of content in a content block selected from the group consisting of audio, video, text, graphics, and data, and unique block identifiers.

26. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said creating step further comprises the steps of:

resolving said floating reference content block to refer to another one of said plurality of content blocks; and

opening a stream comprising the content located in or referred to by said another one of said plurality of content blocks.

27. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said metadata is configured to allow said plurality of content blocks to refer to different blocks of content depending on which user is requesting the content, and to facilitate transition between different streams with said different blocks of content at respective user devices.

28. (Currently Amended) A method of generating a broadcast signal comprising broadcast streams with dynamically selected content for users comprising the steps of:

generating a first content stream packetized into logical content blocks of different types comprising content blocks, reference content blocks and floating reference content blocks, said content blocks comprising at least one of metadata and ~~data~~content, said reference content blocks comprising a reference to another content block, and said floating reference content block being initially empty and later resolved to a content block or reference content block;

transmitting said first content stream and metadata, said metadata comprising data specifying at least one of duration of a content block, number of bytes in a content block, title of content, type of block, security options, security options relating to at least one of encryption, decryption and integrity of the content, a description of the content, format of the at least one of content in a content block selected from the group consisting of audio, video, text, graphics, and data, a description of associated products, a description of the content owner, a description of user rights, unique block identifiers, and a description of how content can be used, and said metadata being transmitted via at least one of in-band transmission by embedding in said first content stream and out-of-band transmission;

using said metadata to select content for transmission to the user; and

generating a second content stream packetized into logical content blocks of said different types in which at least one of said floating reference blocks is resolved into at least one of a content block comprising the selected content and a reference content block comprising a reference to at least one content block comprising the selected content.

29. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 28, further comprising the step of performing Internet Protocol packetization of said first content stream for transport via the Internet.

30. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 28, wherein said first content stream is used to generate different content streams having different content selected for different users and specified via reference content blocks resolved from said

floating reference content blocks in said first content stream, and said user devices are operable to switch between said different content streams using said metadata.

31.   (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 28, wherein said metadata comprises data specifying at least one of duration of a content block, number of bytes in a content block, security options, security options relating to at least one of encryption, decryption and integrity of the content, format of the at least one of content in a content block selected from the group consisting of audio, video, text, graphics, and data, and unique block identifiers.

Claims 32 and 33   (Canceled)